



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

Leaders of Nationwide Illegal Alien Employee-Leasing Conspiracy Plead Guilty

-- Defendants brought in more than 550 illegal workers and laundered more than \$20 million --

WASHINGTON – Two leaders of a nationwide employee-leasing conspiracy that used hundreds of illegal aliens throughout the United States pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Kenneth Marra in the Southern District of Florida, and third defendant was sentenced, the Justice Department and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced today.

Jaroslaw Sawczuk, 39, a Polish citizen formerly of Coral Springs, Fla. and Jozef Bronislaw Bogacki, 43, a native of Poland and naturalized U.S. citizen residing in Clearwater, Fla. pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy to transport, house and otherwise encourage illegal aliens to remain in the United States, and to commit visa, wire, mail, and tax fraud, and money laundering.

Judge Marra sentenced a third defendant, Pavel Preus, 39, a Polish citizen residing in Pompano Beach, Fla., who pleaded guilty to similar charges on September 13, 2005. Preus was sentenced to 37 months in prison, 36 months of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$950,000 for unpaid payroll taxes.

Remaining defendants Lucia Kanis, 31, a Slovak citizen; Ivan Kanis, 39, a Slovak citizen residing in the Slovak Republic; and Andor Pikali, 37, a Slovak citizen who resided in Coral Springs, are federal fugitives, at large, and believed to be overseas.

Bogacki pleaded guilty to six counts, Sawczuk to three, of a 26-count indictment that alleges from 1995 to the present, the defendants conspired to provide unauthorized workers, mostly East Europeans who had entered the United States on tourist visas, to American companies with whom the defendants had contracted to provide legally authorized foreign workers.

The indictment alleges that more than 550 illegal aliens were brought into the United States by the defendants. According to the indictment, the alien workers obtained tourist visas to enter the United States and were employed illegally in the midwest and southeastern United States on farms, in dairies and in factories. The defendants contracted with American employers to provide workers, for whom the defendants were to pay payroll taxes and workers' compensation deductions. During the course of the conspiracy, the defendants failed to pay \$6 million in payroll taxes and laundered in excess of \$20 million.

The remaining defendants face maximum penalties of up to 20 years in prison and fines of up to \$500,000. In addition, the government is seeking forfeiture of the defendants' assets. A forfeiture

hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2006 at 9 a.m. Bogacki and Sawczuk's sentencing is scheduled for Friday, Dec. 15, 2006.

"The Department of Justice will not allow our immigration system to be exploited by those who violate our laws to simply generate profit for themselves," said Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division. "We will work vigorously with our law enforcement partners to identify and shut down illegal employee-leasing operations such as this to preserve the integrity of our immigration system and the security of our nation."

"The defendants, as charged, chose profits over compliance with our country's immigration and employment laws," said U.S. Attorney Alex Acosta of the Southern District of Florida. "In using illegal aliens to generate their profits, the defendants not only took advantage of these individuals, but also potentially compromised the safety of our citizens. I commend the hard work and dedication of the prosecutors and our law enforcement partners in piercing this criminal enterprise."

"We will not allow criminal organizations to exploit America's immigration system for profit. In this case, the defendants laundered roughly \$20 million and failed to pay \$6 million in taxes as part of this illegal employee leasing scheme," said Julie Myers, Department of Homeland Assistant Secretary for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). "ICE is working to restore integrity to the nation's immigration system by targeting violators and working to promote lawful hiring practices."

The joint investigation, known as Operation Pisces, started in 2002. The investigation was led by the Kansas City Office of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Group Supervisor Doug Bemiss; the Department of Labor, Office of the Inspector General; Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigations, Special Agent Sean Kilcoyne; and the Miami IRS field office, Special Agent Kenneth Murphy. The Miami Office of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service also provided support for the investigation.

The case was prosecuted by Senior Trial Attorneys Michael E. Barr and Judith O'Sullivan of the Criminal Division's Domestic Security Section, and by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeffrey H. Kay of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida, Ft. Lauderdale office.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.